

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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R 181613Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7183
INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION USNATO

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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, GE, IR
SUBJECT: GDR MEDIA TREATMENT OF FISCHER MISSION TO
TEHRAN

REF: TEHRAN 3536 (NOTAL)

1. EAST BERLIN PRESS OF APRIL 14 GAVE PROMINENT
COVERAGE TO FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER'S RECEPTION
APRIL 13 IN TEHRAN BY THE SHAH AND HIS PRESENTATION
OF A "PERSONAL" MESSAGE FROM HONECKER EXPRESSING THE
READINESS OF THE GDR "TO DEVELOP LONG-TERM AND STABLE
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MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS RELATIONS ON THE BASIS OF THE
PRINCIPLES OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AND TO THE BENEFIT
OF BOTH PEOPLES." IT WAS FURTHER REPORTED THAT
FISCHER "EXPRESSED THE REGRETS OF THE GDR" OVER
THE FEBRUARY 27 INCIDENT IN EAST BERLIN (IN WHICH
IRANIAN STUDENTS FROM WEST BERLIN TEMPORARILY
OCCUPIED THE IRANIAN EMBASSY, WERE ARRESTED BY THE EAST

GERMAN POLICE AND WERE SUBSEQUENTLY RELEASED BY GDR AUTHORITIES). FISCHER IS REPORTED AS SAYING THAT THE INCIDENT WAS A "PROVOCATION AGAINST THE GDR AND AGAINST THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN BOTH COUNTRIES."

2. EAST GERMAN MEDIA HAVE NEVER REPORTED THAT IRAN WITHDREW ITS AMBASSADOR AND FROZE TRADE WITH THE GDR AS A PROTEST OVER FAILURE BY THE GDR TO PUNISH THE STUDENTS. HOWEVER, MOST EAST GERMAN READERS WILL BE AWARE FROM WESTERN BROADCASTS OF THE MAIN FACTS OF THE INCIDENT.

3. THE IRANIAN CHARGE DES AFFAIRES IN EAST BERLIN HAS TOLD US THAT HE EXPECTS THE GOI AMBASSADOR TO RETURN, PROBABLY NEXT WEEK. HE BELIEVES THAT THE IRANIAN EMBASSY WILL SOON BE FULLY STAFFED AND THAT RELATIONS WILL BE BACK TO NORMAL. CHARGE SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT GDR INVITATION TO SHAH TO VISIT EAST BERLIN REMAINS OPEN AND HE ASSUMES THAT IN TIME VISIT WILL BE MADE. CHARGE ALSO SAID THAT FISCHER TOLD THE SHAH THAT THE GDR HAD UNDERTAKEN TO PREVENT THE OCCURRENCE OF ANOTHER INCIDENT SUCH AS FEBRUARY 27 TAKE-OVER AT THE GOI EMBASSY. THIS WOULD APPLY NOT ONLY TO THE EMBASSY OF IRAN BUT TO ALL FOREIGN MISSIONS IN EAST BERLIN AS WELL.

4. COMMENT: THE PRESS TREATMENT OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VISIT WAS USED TO STRESS FISCHER'S RECEPTION BY THE SHAH AND THE SHAH'S EXPRESSED DESIRE TO DEVELOP RELATIONS IN A CONSTRUCTIVE SPIRIT AND TO MUTUAL ADVANTAGE. THE EAST GERMAN PRESS, IN THAT CONNECTION, HIGHLIGHTED ON APRIL 13 A MESSAGE FROM THE SHAH TO HONECKER EXPRESSING THE WISH TO STRENGTHEN BILATERAL RELATIONS. THE FRICTION BETWEEN IRAN AND THE GDR HAS NOT BEEN ALLUDED TO EXCEPT IN THE MOST INDIRECT MANNER AND THE NET IMPRESSION GIVEN TO THE EAST GERMAN READING PUBLIC WAS THAT BILATERAL RELATIONS ARE DEVELOPING. THE RECEPTION OF FISCHER BY THE SHAH WILL BE CONSIDERED A FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENT BY THE REGIME, REGARDLESS OF THE FACTORS WHICH LED TO IT AND IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT THE VISIT WAS HIGHLIGHTED. ANOTHER POSSIBLE PURPOSE IN GIVING SUCH PROMINENT MEDIA TREATMENT TO THE VISIT AND THE HONECKER-SHAH MESSAGES IS TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE PARTY OPPOSED THE OBJECTIVES OF THE IRANIAN STUDENTS IN WEST BERLIN. THEIR ACTION IS CHARACTERIZED AS BEING DIRECTED AGAINST THE GDR AS WELL AS AGAINST GDR-IRANIAN RELATIONS, THEREBY PERHAPS REMOVING ANY UNDERSTANDABLE UNCERTAINTY WHICH MIGHT HAVE ARISEN IN THE MINDS OF THE PARTY FAITHFUL. END COMMENT. BOLEN

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